

## WHAT WOULD IT TAKE ...

*To create a culture within the public children services agency that reflects confidence and commitment to the value of placing all children with safe and stable families and that demonstrates respect for all families who parent children at home or in out-of-home care?*

- Experienced staff are engaged in the change efforts at an early stage and invited to participate as leaders in the change efforts.
- The agency would adopt, and leadership would model, a Code of Civility that describes the tone and specific behaviors expected in interactions with families who use the services, or partner in providing the services, offered by the agency.
- All new staff would receive an orientation that includes a focus on the agency mission and values with specific reference on how each staff person's work is connected to recruiting Resource Families.
- All new staff would serve a brief "internship" with a neighborhood partner to learn about the culture and style of neighborhood based work.
- All new social work staff would attend a complete cycle of the pre-service training given to Resource Families.
- Panels of foster youth, Resource Families and birth families discuss their experiences with the agency in small groups of new and seasoned staff.
- Resource families who have had success working as team members with social workers and birth families are used to train new Resource Families.
- Social workers receive an orientation to Team Decision Making and they are coached to facilitate the first "icebreaker" meeting between birth and Resource families.
- Foster youth are engaged in support groups to learn skills on how to effectively present their perspective to groups, participate on committees etc.
- Public recognition is given to any staff member caught doing something to support Resource Families in caring for the children.
- Job descriptions, performance evaluations and the basic requirements for promotion are revised, as necessary, to emphasize the importance of staff members reflecting the agency values in their work (placing children with families, providing resources to build supports for families and engaging others as partners in the work of child protection and out-of-home care).
- Contracts with traditional private providers are revised to include the elements that support agency values and goals.
- Incentives are provided to traditional providers of out-of-home care to encourage subcontracting with neighborhood providers.

**AND IN YOUR COMMUNITY...WHAT ELSE MIGHT IT TAKE?**